

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0009

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 12972

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: ETRN, FR

SUBJECT: NIXON- POMPIDOU SUMMIT: AGENDA ITEM IV(E), CONCORDE

REF: PARIS 11891, PARIS 11892

1. AS PROMISED REFTELS FOLLOWING IS FULLER DISCUSSION
AGENDA ITEM IV(E) ON CONCORDE.

2. A PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE FRENCH IS TO ENSURE THAT
THE U. S. DOES NOT ERECT BARRIERS THAT WOULD PREVENT
COMMERCIAL SERVICE BY CONCORDE TO THE U. S. THE FRENCH
ARE CONCERNED OVER THE EXTENT TO WHICH PENDING EPA RULE-
MAKING ON AVIATION ENGINE EMISSION STANDARDS WILL BE
APPLICABLE TO THE CONCORDE; THEY DOUBTLESS HOPE THAT STRINGENT
STANDARDS WOULD LIKE FAA RULEMAKING ON NOISE LEVEL, NOT
BE APPLICABLE TO FOREIGN CARRIER AIRCRAFT. CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE
RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO U. S. AIRPORTS BY SUPERSONIC
AIRCRAFT COULD BE ANSWERED WITH ASSURANCES REGARDING
ACCESS TO DULLES AIRPORT IN WASHINGTON, WHICH IS ADMINISTERED
BY THE FAA. PRESIDENT NIXON HAS ALREADY GIVEN PRESIDENT
POMPIDOU ASSURANCES OF EQUITABLE TREATMENT FOR THE CONCORDE
TO THE EXTENT PERTINENT REGULATIONS FALL WITHIN THE PURVIEW
OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. THIS HAD A SALUTORY EFFECT IN
MODERATING FRENCH REACTION TO THE DROPPING OF CONCORDE
OPTIONS BY PANAM AND TWA. ANY ADDITIONAL ASSURANCES THAT
COULD BE OFFERED ON THESE POINTS WOULD FURTHER ALLAY FRENCH
CONCERN.

WHILE THE FRENCH SEEM TO HAVE NO SERIOUS EXPECTATION
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THAT PANAM AND TWA WILL CHANGE THEIR MIND AND BUY CONCORDE,
POMPIDOU MAY NONETHELESS BE TEMPTED TO INQUIRE WHETHER THE USG
MIGHT NOW BE DISPOSED TO USE ITS GOOD OFFICES TO ENCOURAGE
THESE AIRLINES TO RECONSIDER THEIR DECISION. WE SUGGEST
PRESIDENT NIXON REITERATE THE POSITION STATED IN HIS EARLIER
LETTER TO POMPIDOU, NAMELY, THE USG CANNOT ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE
PURCHASES BY ITS (PRIVATE) AIRLINES, WHICH MUST BE BASED ON
THEIR INDEPENDENT COMMERCIAL ASSESSMENTS.
IRWIN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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